

Safety Gram



December 2011



Holiday Safety Campaign

This campaign began on 18 Nov and runs through 3 Jan. Our vision this year is to ensure all of our Airmen: 1) have an injury free holiday season; 2) minimize traffic mishaps; 3) travel safely; and 4) experience ZERO fatalities. It is also designed to encourage Wingmen to be vigilant and aware of possible risks or hazards, execute a plan for safety and continue our safe record of the past two years (ZERO Air Force -wide vehicle fatalities from Christmas to New Years.) For more information on this campaign, visit the Air Force Safety Center website located at: <https://afkm.wpafb.af.mil/community/videos/home.aspx?Filter=OO-SE-AF-18>



Skiing/Snowboard Safety

In the past 3 years, Air Force personnel have suffered approximately 185 skiing/snowboarding injuries. As ski season approaches, skiers and snowboarders can't wait to hit the snow to leave behind their first fresh tracks of the year. Before you strap into your bindings, keep in mind that a day on the slopes can be dangerous. To avoid a trip to the emergency room, here are a few things to keep in mind before your ski trip:

- **Get in shape.** A basic layer of conditioning will help prevent injuries
- **Check your equipment.** Roughly half of all injuries are due to improper binder performance
- **Know your limits.** Ski or snowboard at your appropriate level
- **Warm up.** Focus on calves, hamstrings, quadriceps as well as shoulders
- **Hydrate.** Being dehydrated can lead to fatigue

Holiday Decorations

Each year, hospital emergency rooms treat about 12,500 people for falls, cuts, shocks, and burns due to incidents involving faulty holiday lights, dried-out Christmas trees and other holiday decorations. According to the National Safety Council (NSC), falls are the leading cause of death in/and around the home. Nearly 3,000 people die from falls each year. It has been found that more than 30,000 people are injured yearly from falling off ladders alone! The NSC believes most accidents can be prevented by following the five rules of ladder safety:



- 1) Select the right ladder for the job.
- 2) Inspect the ladder once assembled.
- 3) When setting up the ladder make sure you lock down all latches.
- 4) Climb up and down the ladder very cautiously and slowly.
- 5) Use common sense. Always have someone below to spot you.

Holiday Travel Plans

Looking to visit family and friends over the holiday season? Be sure to follow a few rules to keep safe and prevent others from worrying.

Plan your trip in advance.

Avoid putting the whole trip on credit. Have some cash put away for the trip so you can handle unexpected changes to your plans.

Air travel is safer than driving and could be less stressful than driving cross country in bad weather.

Have alternate plans ready should bad weather or some other un-expected event occur.

Let people know your trip plans.

Where are you headed; how you will get there; when will you be arriving, what route are you taking; things like that.

Driving any significant distance requires good pre-planning. Perhaps a buddy to share the driving with. Planned rest breaks. Ensure your vehicle is in good condition and the driver is well rested. Consider taking that extra day of



leave or two and give yourself time to get there and back un-rushed.

ENJOY your holiday; don't let it be a stressful event!

CHRISTMAS TREE STUFF

Christmas trees are involved in about 300 fires annually, resulting in 10 deaths, 30 injuries and an average of about \$10 million in property damage/loss. In addition, there are more than 13,000 candle-related fires each year, which result in 140 deaths and \$205 million in property loss.

Always choose a freshly cut tree. To test a tree, strike the stump down on a firm surface. If needles fall off, the tree is too dry. The tree could absorb as much as a gallon of water the first day. Place the tree away from heat sources and, of course, from sparks and open flame. Always keep the tree well watered. Check and refill often. Use only noncombustible decorations. Check and replace any worn or damaged light sets. It is a good practice to replace any set that is more than four or five years old. Use only U.L. or F.M. approved light strings; NO CANDLES! Avoid overloading electrical circuits or creating "octopus" connections. Do not use cellophane. There is no way to make it flameproof. Treat LIVE trees with an approved flame retardant. Do not use cotton batting – including Santa's whiskers -- or paper decorations unless they have been treated with a flame-retardant substance. Disconnect the lights at bedtime or when unattended. Use miniature lights that produce less heat.



Holiday "BLUES"

The winter holiday season, including Christmas, Hanukkah, and Thanksgiving, for most people is a fun time of the year filled with parties, celebrations, and social gatherings with family and friends. But for many people, it is a time filled with sadness, self-reflection, loneliness, and anxiety. Family and friends can help. An appropriate diagnosis and treatment is the most important thing one can do.



The Airman and Family Readiness Center is one of many options to seek assistance. Being a good Wingman is critical during this time of year. Remember; **ACE:** Ask, Care and Escort.